

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of creating photo vignettes, said method comprising:
accessing digitized photos;
accessing photo-clustering parameters; and
clustering said digitized photos in accordance with said photo-clustering parameters to obtain digitized photo vignettes.
2. The method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising:
accessing a photo-distribution parameter; and
enabling selective distribution of said digitized photo vignettes in accordance with said photo-distribution parameter.
3. The method as recited in Claim 2, wherein said photo-distribution parameter is selected from the group consisting essentially of:
the time when said digitized photos were taken, the geographic location at which the digitized photos were taken, the camera used to take said digitized photos, the camera's position relative to the subject matter of said digitized photos, a specified subject matter of said digitized photos, the person who produced said digitized photos, a receiver of said digitized photo vignettes, and the confidentiality classification of the subject matter of said digitized photos.
4. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said photo-clustering parameter is selected from the group consisting essentially of:
the time when said digitized photos were taken, the geographic location at which the digitized photos were taken, the camera used to take said digitized photos, the camera's position relative to the subject matter of said digitized photos, a specified subject matter of said digitized photos, the person who produced said digitized photos, a receiver of said digitized photo vignettes, and the confidentiality classification of the subject matter of said digitized photos.

5. The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said digitized photos are obtained by using a photo-acquisition device selected from the group consisting essentially of:
a digitized cell-phone camera, a video camera, a computer camera, a Personal Digital Assistant, a conventional camera, an existing repository, and a photo scanner camera.
6. The method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising:
annotating at least a portion of said digitized photo vignettes with meta data pertaining to said digitized photo vignettes.
7. A system for inducing acquisition of photo images, said system comprising:
a photo-accessor for accessing photo images;
a photo-clusterer for clustering said photo images to obtain digitized photo vignettes; and
a photo-distributor for enabling selective distribution of said digitized photo vignettes such that a user is enabled to freely acquire said photo images and have said photo images automatically clustered into said digitized photo vignettes for selective distribution.
8. The system of Claim 7, further comprising:
a media repository for storing said photo images and said digitized photo vignettes.
9. The system of Claim 7, wherein said photo-accessor is configured to access digitized photo images acquired from a photo-acquisition device selected from the group consisting essentially of:
a digitized cell-phone camera, a video camera, a computer camera, a Personal Digital Assistant, a conventional camera, an existing repository, and a photo scanner.
10. The system of Claim 7, wherein said photo-distributor comprises a digitized photo presentation module.

11. A computer-readable medium comprising computer executable instructions stored therein, said instructions for causing a computer system to perform a method of creating photo vignettes, said method comprising:

- accessing digitized photos;
- accessing photo-clustering parameters; and
- clustering said digitized photos in accordance with said photo-clustering parameters to obtain digitized photo vignettes.

12. The computer-readable medium of Claim 11, wherein said method further comprises:

- accessing a photo-distribution parameter; and
- enabling selective distribution of said digitized photo vignettes in accordance with said photo-distribution parameter.

13. The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein said photograph-distribution parameter is selected from the group consisting essentially of:

- the time when said digitized photos were taken, the geographic location at which the digitized photos were taken, the camera used to take said digitized photos, the camera's position relative to the subject mater of said digitized photos, a specified subject matter of said digitized photos, the person who produced said digitized photos, a receiver of said digitized photo vignettes, and the confidentiality classification of the subject matter of said digitized photos.

14. The computer-readable medium of Claim 11, wherein said photo-clustering parameter is selected from the group consisting essentially of:

- the time when said digitized photos were taken, the geographic location at which the digitized photos were taken, the camera used to take said digitized photos, the camera's position relative to the subject mater of said digitized photos, a specified subject matter of said digitized photos, the person who produced said digitized photos, a receiver of said digitized photo vignettes, and the confidentiality classification of the subject matter of said digitized photos.

15. The computer-readable medium of Claim 11, wherein said photo images are obtained by using a photo-acquisition device selected from the group consisting essentially of:

a digitized cell-phone camera, a video camera, a computer camera, a Personal Digital Assistant, a conventional camera, an existing repository, and a photo scanner camera.

16. The computer-readable medium of Claim 11, wherein said method further comprises:

annotating at least a portion of said digitized photo vignettes with meta data pertaining to said digitized photo vignettes.

17. The computer-readable medium of Claim 11, comprising a digital storage device including a CD, a diskette, a video cassette, electronic mail and a digital memory device.